

Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative Governance Document

I. PURPOSE/VISION

To acquire and share information to support on-the-ground strategic conservation efforts in light of climate change and other landscape-scale stressors, or issues of mutual concern, through a productive partnership among Federal, state, tribal management agencies, and non-governmental conservation organizations, communities and other stakeholders. The SRLCC contains unique natural landscapes and a diverse tribal and non-tribal cultural heritage. Across all cultures, a unifying theme is the need for water and natural resources to sustain human life and maintain human activities that have socio-cultural and economic significance.

II. MISSION

The Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative (SRLCC) is a self-directed partnership of state, federal, tribal, and non-governmental organizations dedicated to integrating science and management expertise to support sustainable outcome-based conservation delivery. The SRLCC recognizes individual partner missions and statutory responsibilities while creating synergies among cultural, terrestrial, air, and aquatic resource managers to facilitate landscape-scale conservation and adaptive management. The SRLCC identifies priority science issues and needs, develops spatially-explicit resource stewardship goals, and provides scientific decision support for measurable outcomes. The SRLCC is part of a seamless national network of LCCs focused on meeting the shared needs of partner organizations. The SRLCC will also coordinate with the Climate Science Centers (CSCs) to facilitate the transfer of science and information from the CSCs to the SRLCC, and to provide information to the CSCs regarding the science priorities and needs of the SRLCC.

III. SCOPE

The geography and general thematic scope of the SRLCC are described here in summary format. A more detailed description of the scope and functions of the SRLCC will be provided in the Operational Plan.

1. ***Geographic Scope*** - The SRLCC includes large portions of four states: Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah, as well as smaller parts of Wyoming, Idaho, and Nevada. The area is geographically complex, including wide elevation and topographic variation; from 14,000 foot peaks to the Grand Canyon and cold desert basins. This topographically complex region includes the headwaters of the Colorado River and Rio Grande, the Wasatch and Uinta Mountains to the west, and the Southern Rocky Mountains to the east, separated by the rugged tableland of the Colorado Plateau. LCCs adjacent to the SRLCC include:

Desert, Great Basin, Great Northern, Great Plains, and Plains and Prairie Potholes LCCs.

2. ***Scope of the SRLCC*** – The SRLCC is a true partnership, formed and directed by land, water, wildlife and cultural resource managers and interested public and private organizations. The LCC will recognize individual partner missions while identifying areas of mutual interest in developing applied science to support the conservation of land, water, air, ecosystems, including terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, wildlife, including game and non-game species and habitats, and cultural resources. The SRLCC will also incorporate the traditional knowledge of Indian tribes and other cultures historically living within the SRLCC into goals and strategies and will ensure that science priorities are designed to help continue vitality of traditional cultural institutions and knowledge.

IV. FUNCTIONS (AND SERVICES)

The operational scope of the SRLCC is to provide scientific and decision support for landscape-scale conservation efforts related to land, water, air, ecosystems, wildlife and cultural resources. Functions of the SRLCC will include the following:

1. ***Identify Common Resource Conservation Needs*** – Identify shared priorities and opportunities to leverage resources among SRLCC partners, and interact at multiple levels with the technical and executive staff of the member organizations.
2. ***Support Science Development*** – Identify and facilitate the development, integration, and application of scientific information and tools needed to inform management decisions related to the conservation of land, water, air, ecosystems, wildlife, traditional social institutions, and cultural resources. Work with SRLCC partners, CSCs, universities and other science providers to meet the identified science needs of the SRLCC.
3. ***Effect Coordination*** – Coordinate with LCC partners, adjacent LCCs, CSCs, and others to aggregate capacity, create synergies, and avoid duplication and competition between organizations. Within the SRLCC, prioritize and coordinate research, science needs and integration of applied science and actions at a landscape scale, leveraging the capabilities of respective agencies/organizations/partnerships. Coordinate among ongoing and emerging landscape assessment, management, science, and conservation activities to identify commonality, continuity, and efficiency for stakeholders. Such activities include, but are not limited to:
 - BLM Rapid Ecoregional Assessments
 - The Western Regional Partnership
 - Joint Ventures

- National Park Service I&M and CESU Networks
 - Inventory and monitoring programs
 - Western Governor’s Association’s Decision Support Systems Pilot Project
 - Bureau of Reclamation West-Wide Climate Risk Assessments and Basin Studies
 - Plans of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies (including but not limited to State Action Plans)
 - National Wetland Condition Assessment
 - Other LCCs and the CSCs
4. ***Inform Conservation Action*** – Promote conservation actions at the unit and ecosystem level by providing scientific information and decision support tools and informing conservation actions that support resource resilience. Provide support for:
- biological/ecological planning;
 - conservation design in a cultural context;
 - prioritization and coordination of research;
 - inventory and monitoring program design; and
 - adaptive management.
5. ***Monitor and Evaluate*** - Monitor landscape scale indicators, test scientific assumptions, and evaluate effectiveness of conservation actions to inform adaptive management decision making.
6. ***Communicate and Educate*** - Communicate relevant science information and SRLCC activities and opportunities to partners and users.

V. STRUCTURE/COMPOSITION AND PARTICIPATION/ROLES (DIFFERENT WAYS TO PARTICIPATE)

Participation in the SRLCC can include participation at multiple levels, including participation as a SRLCC Partner, Working Group participant, and/or Steering Committee member.

1. **SRLCC Partners**

Natural resources managers, stakeholders, and others engaged in or supporting natural and cultural resource conservation within the boundaries of the SRLCC who would like to participate in the SRLCC, but do not wish to commit to participation as a member of the Steering Committee or a Working Group, may participate in the SRLCC as an SRLCC Partner. Activities of the Partners may include:

- Attend Meetings – including Steering Committee and/or Working Group meetings and to provide input at these meetings at certain points;
- Be included on a mailing list to receive updates on the activities of the SRLCC and to provide feedback as appropriate; and
- Provide and receive data and science.

2. **Working Groups**

The Steering Committee may support and/or facilitate the creation of working groups or ad hoc committees to assist the SRLCC staff and Steering Committee complete operational functions and actions. Workgroups or committees could conduct and/or develop projects that fulfill specific LCC needs related to science, data, communications, partnerships, etc. The Steering Committee will approve the formation and composition of a working group or ad hoc committee. Participation in a working group or ad hoc committee is not limited to the members of the SRLCC Steering Committee and may include any LCC partner.

3. **Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee may include executive-level representation for federal, state, tribal, and non-governmental organizations that work on regionally scoped landscape conservation. The Steering Committee reserves the privilege of adding members that allow for more comprehensive inclusion of conservation partners.

- a. ***Primary & Alternate Steering Committee Members*** - Each Steering Committee member may name one primary and one alternate representative or designated staff authorized to represent the entity on SRLCC matters while maintaining the integrity of decision making.
- b. ***Chair and Vice Chair of the Steering Committee*** - The Steering Committee shall select a Chair and a Vice Chair. The Chair will serve for one year, and will be succeeded by the Vice Chair. Selection of the initial Chair and Vice Chair shall be made by consensus. Thereafter, selection of the Vice Chair shall be made by consensus. To the extent possible, the Chair and Vice Chair positions should rotate among the different entities comprised by the Steering Committee (e.g., states, tribes, Federal agencies and non-profit organizations), to ensure that all entities have an opportunity to be represented in these positions, and to strive to have diverse leadership for the LCC in any given year.
- c. ***Ad hoc Tribal Advisory Seat:***
A Steering Committee member representing a tribal entity will be selected by the Steering Committee to serve in an advisory role to assist with external tribal outreach and oversee a tribal working group to accomplish this outreach. The Tribal Advisor will serve for a term of one year.
- d. ***Functions of the Steering Committee are to -***
 - o Set vision, goals, priorities, and outcome-based targets for SRLCC;
 - o Provide direction to SRLCC Coordinator, SRLCC Science Coordinator, and any other staff;
 - o Approve Long-term Strategy, Annual Work Plan, Governance Document and Operational Plan;

- Approve SRLCC capacity needs;
 - Identify funding sources and approve funding for Annual Work Plan, including priority setting process;
 - Provide communication on SRLCC relevant organizational programs and initiatives;
 - Evaluate effectiveness of the LCC as a whole in accomplishing its mission and goals;
 - Set science priorities and work with CSCs;
 - Engage all stakeholders involved in natural and cultural resources management;
 - Ensure cross-communication in the national network of LCCs; and
 - Ensure consistency with DOI Secretary's Plan.
- e. ***Steering Committee Composition Criteria*** - The Steering Committee will consist of representatives from organizations that collectively have the following characteristics, especially at a regional level:
- Jurisdictional responsibility for natural and cultural resource management and actively engaged in addressing natural and cultural resource management issues;
 - Capacity for furthering the mission of the SRLCC;
 - Provide direct links and communication with the science community and other conservation organizations or land managers involved in conservation delivery, particularly those operating at local levels;
 - Represent a diverse set of interests and trust responsibilities; and
 - Capability for identifying science needs and for science development and delivery.
- f. ***Individual Steering Committee Member Roles and Responsibilities***
- Executive and management level representatives of their agency or organization.
 - Ability to communicate organization's legal mandates and responsibilities.
 - Knowledge and expertise in the substantive capacity of their respective organization or partnership.
 - Ability to mobilize science and/or on-the-ground resources within their organization as appropriate (funds, staff, data, etc).
 - Ability to influence implementation of LCC work within their organization as appropriate.
 - Willing to hear other perspectives.
 - For federal agencies, facilitate and support federal agencies' individual tribal consultation responsibilities.
- g. ***Roles of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Steering Committee***
- Provide leadership and support to the Steering Committee in carrying out the Steering Committee functions described in paragraph d, above.

- Serve as points of contact for the SRLCC Coordinator and Science Coordinator for communication with the Steering Committee.
- Serve as liaisons to other Steering Committee members to promote effective communication among Steering Committee members.
- Provide leadership, feedback and direction to the SRLCC Coordinator and Science Coordinator to implement the actions approved by the Steering Committee and to prepare documents or plans for consideration by the Steering Committee.
- Lead and help plan Steering Committee meetings and conference calls, with support from the SRLCC Coordinator and Science Coordinator.
- Reach out to other Steering Committee members and SRLCC Partners to identify support for the SRLCC, including funding, staff or other resources.

h. **Initial Members** – *initial list of member organizations (the Steering Committee recognizes that all Tribes within the SRLCC are welcomed members to participate on the Steering Committee)*

- Arizona Game and Fish Department
- Bureau of Indian Affairs – Western Region
- Bureau of Indian Affairs - Southwest Region
- Bureau of Indian Affairs – Navajo Region
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation – Upper CO Region
- Colorado Department of Natural Resources
- Colorado Natural Heritage Program
- Fish And Wildlife Service
- Intermountain West Joint Venture
- National Park Service
- New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
- New Mexico Office of the State Engineer
- Pueblo of Jemez
- Shivwits Band of Paiutes
- The Nature Conservancy
- Trust for Public Lands
- USDA, Forest Service – Rocky Mountain Region
- USDA, Forest Service – Rocky Mountain Research Station
- USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service – New Mexico
- US Geological Survey
- Utah Governor’s Public Lands Policy Coordination Office
- Wyoming Game and Fish Department

i. **Decision Making** - The presence of at least 75% of the primary or alternate designees from participating entities shall constitute a quorum. The Steering Committee reaches agreement by consensus. A consensus agreement is one that all group members can support, built by identifying and exploring all parties' interests and by developing an outcome that

satisfies these interests to the greatest extent possible. For purposes of SRLCC business, “consensus” means votes of affirmation or no objection by members present at the time of the vote. For issues directly affecting the programs or prerogatives of one or more entities not present at the time of the vote, then votes of affirmation or no objection shall be obtained from each such entity prior to the proposal being placed into effect.

If consensus is not possible, the level of support and dissent will be noted and all deliberations and products of the SRLCC will be considered by the management agencies and organizations in their decision making. Nothing in this section shall be construed to suggest the SRLCC may make decisions that impact or are contrary to the statutory or regulatory mandates of any participating entity within their respective areas of jurisdiction.

- j. **Steering Committee Meetings** – Meetings will be conducted and recorded as follows:
- ***Meeting Record*** - Steering Committee Membership shall be maintained and recorded in meeting summaries and notes by the SRLCC Coordinator or administrative designee of the SRLCC Coordinator
 - ***Meeting Frequency*** –The Steering Committee will meet at least two times a year. Additional Steering Committee business can be conducted by e-mail, teleconference, and web conference, the expectation is additional four to six conference calls.
 - ***Meeting Openness*** – All SRLCC partners, and the public, are welcome to attend Steering Committee meetings.
- k. **Addition or Replacements of Steering Committee Members:** The requirements for adding and removing members, filling vacancies and terminating a Steering Committee member are as follows:
- ***Adding Members and Filling Vacancies.*** New Members will be considered by the Steering Committee upon receipt of a written request by the Steering Committee Chair from the agency or organization that documents its interest in participating and identifies the individual that would be representing such organization. Consensus of the Steering Committee is required for acceptance of membership.
 - ***Resignation.*** Resignation by a representative from the Steering Committee must be in writing and received by the Chairperson. If a representative notifies the Steering Committee that its representative on the Steering Committee no longer represents the member organization, the person is no longer eligible to be a member of the Steering Committee.

- ***Excessive Absences.*** A Steering Committee member may be removed for excess absences from the Steering Committee if he or she has three unexcused absences from consecutive Steering Committee meetings.
- ***Removing a Member.*** A Steering Committee member may be removed for cause by a three-fourths vote of the remaining members of the Steering Committee.

VI. Discussion Guidelines

The following guidelines encourage productive deliberation. Group members will commit to best efforts at following them and will give facilitators authority to enforce them:

OPENNESS

- To other points of view
- To outcome
- To all representatives

LISTENING

- Focus on each speaker rather than prepare your response
- No interruptions

FAIRNESS

- Speak briefly
- Everyone participates

RESPECT

- Disagree without being disagreeable
- No personal attacks

COMMITMENT

- Prepare for each session
- Attend each session
- Honor the agenda and make agenda changes with the whole group
- Begin and end on time
- Get up to speed if you missed a meeting

All participants agree to act in good faith in all aspects of group deliberations, to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes joint problem solving and collaboration, and to consider the input and viewpoints of other participants. All members will be given equal opportunity to be heard with the intention of encouraging the free and open exchange of ideas, views, and information prior to achieving consensus.

VII. Staff

The SRLCC staff composition includes a SRLCC Coordinator and a SRLCC Science Coordinator reporting to the Steering Committee Chair. Other staff may be identified as agreed to by the Steering Committee.

The functions of the Staff are to:

- Promote and communicate long-term vision;
- Develop and write long-term strategy and annual work plans;
- Coordinate science and information needs;
- Develop and implement process for operations;
- Coordinate, communicate, and provide outreach to SRLCC partners and the science community;
- Oversee the Request For Proposal process; and
- Coordinate data management with SRLCC partners

1. ***The SRLCC Coordinator*** works directly with the Steering Committee Chair to provide communication to the Steering Committee and receive their direction. The SRLCC Coordinator leads, facilitates, and communicates SRLCC vision among the staff; directs overall operations of the SRLCC; coordinates with the Science Coordinator; and ensures coordination among SRLCC staff with direction from the Steering Committee. The Coordinator also oversees development and functioning of any Steering Committee-identified subcommittees. The SRLCC Coordinator shall also communicate and collaborate with adjacent LCC Coordinators to address trans-boundary issues that may arise during SRLCC activities.
2. ***Science Coordinator*** works with the Coordinator to provide coordination and synthesis of SRLCC science activities, products, data management, and needs. The Science Coordinator provides assistance to the Coordinator on specific technical and science-related duties and tracks and translates status and results of relevant science and research activities among the SRLCC staff and users. The Science Coordinator also maintains contact with and supports the needs of subcommittees.
3. **Additional staff** support and duties and responsibilities will be determined by the Steering Committee. Additional staff could include, for example, staff employed by an SRLCC partner in support of the SRLCC.

VIII. LCC OPERATIONS

1. Communications and Information Exchange

a. *LCC Communications*

- The Steering Committee provides guidance, research needs, selection criteria, and weighting factors to the SRLCC Coordinator, Science Coordinator, and Staff, along with assignments, requests for analysis, and other tasks as needed.
- The SRLCC Coordinator and Science Coordinator synthesize research results received from funded proposals and provide this synthesis to program and policy managers in the SRLCC Partners for their information in carrying out activities that further SRLCC priorities.
- The SRLCC Partners provide feedback to the SRLCC Coordinator and Science Coordinator regarding a research product's usefulness and the manner in which SRLCC research products have been put to use.

b. *Climate Science Centers* – The Science Coordinator will be the SRLCC's primary point of contact with the Climate Science Centers. The Science Coordinator will be responsible for informing the CSCs of science needs identified by the SRLCC, and for disseminating data, research and the results of fundamental science work conducted by the CSCs back to the SRLCC.

c. *External Organizations (& Media)* – In communicating about the work of the LCC, including communicating with the press, each member agrees to speak only for herself or himself; to avoid characterizing the personal position or comments of other participants; and to always be thoughtful of the impact that specific public statements may have on the group and its ability to complete its work. No one will speak for any group, other than their own, without the consensus of that group. Should anyone wish the collaborative group to release information to the press, the group will do so only through a mutually agreeable statement, drafted by consensus of all of that group's members.

d. *Adjacent LCCs* - The SRLCC Coordinator and Science Coordinator shall communicate and collaborate with adjacent LCC Coordinators to address trans-boundary issues that may arise during SRLCC activities. LCCs adjacent to the SRLCC include: Desert, Great Basin, Great Northern, Great Plains, and Plains and Prairie Potholes LCCs.

e. *National DOI LCC coordinator* - The SRLCC Coordinator will be the primary point of contact with the National DOI LCC Coordinator

(National Coordinator). The SRLCC Coordinator will be responsible for consolidating information for submission to the National Coordinator when data calls are made to the SRLCC but responses require participation by multiple entities. The Coordinator will also be responsible to disseminate information received from the National Coordinator, as appropriate, to the SRLCC.

2. **Amendments**

Amendments to this governance document may be done by consensus of a quorum of the Steering Committee at any time. The Steering Committee will conduct an annual review of this document to verify if there is a need for amendments to more efficiently and effectively meet the purpose of the SRLCC.